

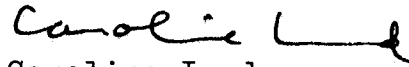
February 25, 1977

To the PC and Field Organizers:

Enclosed are several documents concerning a debate that is taking place in the Sattar League, the Iranian sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.

At the present time the documents are not for broader distribution. However, national field organizers should make sure the local or branch organizer in cities where the Sattar League exists, know about this debate.

Comradely,



Caroline Lund

enc.

Declaration of the Permanent Revolution Faction (Translation)
(Struggle Against Split in the Sattar League)

February 7, 1977

On January 22, 1977, comrades Hassan Hakimi and Heydar Gilani, two members of the Sattar League who were also members of the Permanent Revolution Tendency, were expelled from the League. The hasty expulsion of these two comrades, who are among the most active cadres of the League--given the charges brought against them and the method of expulsion--would not have been acceptable even if the expulsion had taken place under ordinary circumstances. But the fact of the matter is that these two members of the Permanent Revolution Tendency were expelled from membership in the League in the middle of an internal discussion and at a time when both comrades were preparing documents for the internal discussion. Both comrades refuted the charges brought against them at an internal meeting and reiterated their loyalty to the program and the organizational principles of the League. Despite their request for having adequate time to prepare a written defense--something which is the undeniable right of every member of the Trotskyist movement--their request was denied. Thus their expulsion under these circumstances is an act which signals the beginning of a dangerous move against the unity of the Sattar League.

Not only has the right of these two comrades to defend themselves been violated, but the right of all members of the Sattar League. Especially violated were the rights of those comrades who were present at the "trial" of these two comrades for they were denied the opportunity to have the text of their defense in order to make a correct judgment on that basis. Instead, with an unjustifiable speed, even before the end of the one week period granted for the preparation of their defense by the Executive Committee of the Sattar League in Texas, and in an atmosphere poisoned by the spreading of all sorts of slanders and unfounded charges, the expulsion of these comrades has taken place. At a meeting on January 16 in Austin, one week prior to the official expulsion of comrades Hakimi and Gilani, and even before providing them with the written charges, comrade Cyrus Faydar, who was participating in the meeting as an observer from the Political Committee, as a representative of the Sattar League in the Executive Committee of the Fourth International and a member of the Steering Committee of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction, said the following, referring to the leadership of the Sattar League in Texas: "the concrete proposal that it has, the concrete solution that it has, concerning this question, is getting the goddamn axe out and chopping a few people."* Thus it is clear that the decision to expel, with comrade Cyrus's knowledge, had been reached before this meeting. Comrade Cyrus was simply announcing that decision. As regards the Texas leadership, the rest was just a formality.

At the end of the January 16 meeting, comrade Cyrus spoke for an hour in the name of the Political Committee, under the point of internal discussion. During his speech he attacked comrades Hakimi and Gilani and the Permanent Revolution Tendency, and then, without giving an opportunity for the positions of the Permanent Revolution Tendency to be defended, the meeting was adjourned. This set the background for the official expulsion on January 22,

The expulsion of comrades Hakimi and Gilani is a turning point in the development of a series of illegitimate organizational moves which, from the very beginning of the internal discussion, have been employed against the present members of the Permanent Revolution Tendency. These moves, a fraction of which is documented in the document, Against Threats and Victimization in the Internal Discussion and its appendices, will convince every member of the Sattar League, even those who disagree with the positions of the Permanent Revolution Tendency, of their unprincipled character. It is not accidental that this document had not been distributed in Austin at the time of the expulsion of the two comrades, that is, more than a month after its submission to the internal discussion bulletin.

This is not the first time that the question of expulsion has been raised during the internal discussion in the Sattar League. According to comrade Nader Javadi's letter of protest to the Political Committee, dated November 23, 1976, on November 22 comrade Cyrus, as the secretary of the League, telephoned comrade Javadi, the League organizer in Portland and informed him that all the comrades in that city (Javadi and Gilak) and also comrade Heydari would be "suspended", adding "Now you must get out and build!"** Comrade Javadi reminded comrade Cyrus that in case there is a charge, according to the norms of the International it must be given to him and other comrades in a written form, with adequate time provided for the preparation of a defense. Comrade Cyrus at that time did not give his charges in written form and the expulsions did not materialize. Now the same expulsion scheme has materialized in the case of the two comrades in Texas.

From a political point of view a split in the Sattar League at this time is not justifiable at all. In their document, The Political Anatomy of Ahmad Heydari's Tendency, the PC majority comrades, Bahman, Farvis, Hossein and Cyrus, claim that on the one hand they have no fundamental differences with the Permanent Revolution Tendency. And yet, on the other hand, in the same document, they accuse the Permanent Revolution Tendency of "dividing the democratic revolution and the socialist revolution into

two historical epochs." Therefore, differences on the theory of the Permanent Revolution remains unclear. And at the same time these comrades have not yet written a response to the other four points of difference, and the discussion has not progressed. But the expulsion of comrades Hakimi and Gilani, under the circumstances that it took place, means the beginning of an imposed split in the Sattar League, a split against which we must stubbornly resist. We are now faced with a new situation in the Sattar League, a situation which poses a new responsibility to every member of the League. None of us has the right to be indifferent toward this responsibility because the very existence of the Sattar League is in danger.

In early June 1976 the document, Our Present Tasks was distributed as the document adopted by the National Committee. On September 28, 1976, comrade Heydari's document, Points of Difference in the Sattar League, was submitted to the Political Committee. On December 7, 1976, in order to advance the internal discussion and help politically clarify the points of difference, the Permanent Revolution Tendency was formed. The need for the formation of the Tendency resulted from the fact that six months after the distribution of Our Present Tasks and two months after the distribution of Points of Difference in the Sattar League the FC majority comrades had not yet submitted a document to clarify political differences. And, at the same time, they were continuing their incorrect organizational methods in violation of the League's internal democracy--itself one of the points of difference. The Permanent Revolution Tendency spelled out as one of its aims the creation of a calm and democratic atmosphere in the internal discussion in order that the discussion could advance politically until the time at which a democratic congress would be held.

The Permanent Revolution Tendency tried its best to keep the discussion on a political course and to reduce internal frictions. It even followed those decisions of the leadership which were contrary to the traditional norms of democracy inside the Trotskyist movement. For example, we can mention the November 14 decree issued by comrade Cyrus, according to which public speaking by comrade Heydari was banned. At the same time he issued this decree comrade Cyrus insisted that he had no fundamental political difference with comrade Heydari! The Portland comrades discontinued building a public meeting for comrade Heydari at the local university. Comrade Heydari has not spoken in any public meeting. Instead, he has appealed to the National Committee for repeal of that decision. This is but one example of the efforts of the Permanent Revolution Tendency to respect such strange decisions of the leadership. However, because the leadership comrades who are opposed to the positions of the Permanent Revolution Tendency continue to violate the norms of internal democracy within the League, under the pretext of "democratic centralism," there now exists a crisis in the Sattar League. The extent of this crisis was not clearly detectable at the time of the formation of the Tendency. Instead of showing their capability in leading the internal discussion toward political clarification the comrades opposed to the document Points of

Difference in the Sattar League, in the name of the PC, have resorted to organizational maneuvers against their political opposition, ever since the formation of the Permanent Revolution Tendency. To justify such moves they introduce them as the common and ordinary norms of a Leninist party. The purpose of these organizational moves--from the exclusion of comrades' participation from decision-making in regards to the League's activities to threats of expulsion and efforts in the search for an excuse to expel, and finally to the actual expulsion--was to create a tense internal atmosphere in the League, in order to prevent free expression of ideas by comrades during the internal discussion. All these actions have occurred either directly or indirectly through misuse of organizational positions assigned to the comrades who oppose the Permanent Revolution Tendency. This unprincipled weapon, however, was not effective so far as the comrades of the Permanent Revolution Tendency were concerned, because they openly organized themselves on the basis of a clear program. At the time when comrades Hakimi and Gilani were expelled from the League comrades of the Permanent Revolution Tendency had submitted seven documents to the internal discussion bulletin, whereas comrades opposed to the Tendency had not submitted even one document. What then is the reason behind such organizational moves and the recent two expulsions which as a turning point, signals the beginning of a split in the Sattar League?

The answer to this question is the existence of a group in the Sattar League which, without willing to openly form a principled tendency or a faction on the basis of clear political positions, functions as a secret faction and carries out its factional activities in the name of the League's leadership. Because the secret faction does not have a clear political basis it is based on creating an atmosphere full of slanders, suspicions and tension. It is an atmosphere in which personal and friendly relations stand above principles. For the secret faction the elected bodies of the League, including the Political Committee, are only a formality, and so is voting at its meetings. Furthermore, the expulsion of comrades Hakimi and Gilani under the "observation" of comrade Cyrus, shows that a part of the secret faction is attempting to implement a speedy and unprincipled split in the Sattar League.

On November 3, 1976 comrades Hakimi, Gilani, and Koochek wrote a letter*** to the PC, protesting their exclusion from the internal life of the League by the Austin branch leadership. It must be said that the decision to expel these comrades was already in effect. Now, instead of taking up that protest, the Austin branch leadership, with the participation of comrade Cyrus, has made the expulsions official.

Faced with the danger that is threatening the unity of the Sattar League the Permanent Revolution Tendency by way of this declaration transforms itself into a faction. In this way it can confront, as a disciplined body, the new, and grave, situation in the Sattar League.

The Secret Faction and the Danger of Split in the Sattar League

In the last section of his document, Points of Difference in the Sattar League, comrade Heydari explained how the document Our Present Tasks--which neither had a date nor a

title at the time of its distribution in early June, 1976-- was distributed:

"Thus with the knowledge that there is a difference with the document, and at a time when a comrade with a different view was absent, some of the PC comrades had decided to edit the document and then distribute it. The comrade with the different view was not informed of this decision, but members of the League received the document under the impression that it represents the collective view of the whole Political Committee, and without knowing that other views exist. The method used by the PC comrades is an objective violation of the Leninist party-building norms, and it is alien to traditions of the Trotskyist movement. If this has been the attitude taken in regard to internal discussion, then the question is posed: what other decisions could be made over the head of the collective Political Committee in the future?" (emphasis added).

This question, which was a warning signal about the existence of a body above the PC which decides in the name of the PC, did not take long to be answered in a clear way by the secret faction. In the above mentioned letter from comrade Nader Javadi to the PC, regarding the possibility of building a public meeting for comrade Heydari at a local university, a decision reached in the presence, and with the agreement of, comrades from Seattle, we read the following:

"Later, after the comrades from S. [Seattle] left, comrade Cyrus Paydar called me up on the phone on the morning of Sunday, November 14, at 4 a.m. In that conversation he informed me that the PC had decided to block any kind of meeting for comrade Heydari, be it formal or informal." (First two emphases added).

But the documented facts reveal that up to 4 a.m. of November 14, 1976 the PC had never reached such a decision. Even two days after this incident the PC was still uninformed of such a decision. According to the minutes of the PC, the motion to ban public speaking for comrade Heydari was made and passed at the November 16, 1976 meeting of the Political Committee. Therefore, it must be asked, how could comrade Cyrus have announced such a decision on behalf of the PC two days prior to its having been passed by the PC?

It is clear that the decision to ban comrade Heydari from public speaking was made by the secret faction, immediately after one of the Seattle comrades had informed comrade Cyrus. This decision was then communicated to the Portland organizer in the name of the PC. Two days later, the same decision, which was already in effect, was raised as a "motion" by comrade Cyrus in absentia, and voted upon in the PC--only as a formality. Thus the secret faction views the Political Committee of the Sattar League not as a team leadership body, but only as a formality to camouflage the secret faction.

On November 22, 1976, comrade Cyrus, under the pretext that the decision of the PC (in reality the decision of the secret faction) had not been carried out called up the Portland

organizer and ordered him, along with comrades Gilak and Heydari, expelled. Evidently, however, even though the secret faction had accepted the public speaking ban on comrade Heydari comrade Cyrus had not been able to convince the secret faction to expel these three comrades. The question of expulsion was then disregarded. Now, the expulsion of comrades Hakimi and Gilani shows that the split wing of the secret faction has regained its strength. Comrade Cyrus's sudden decision to travel to Texas, and the speedy expulsions, indicate that the split wing has already made up its mind to impose an immediate and unprincipled split, misusing for this purpose the various resources of the League, including its financial resources.

The recent events as a whole make clear the background of previous incidents which indicate the existence of a secret faction in the Sattar League, and its tendency toward split. The PC decision of May 6, 1976, approving comrade Cyrus's motion to distribute the document, Our Present Tasks, without the knowledge of all the comrades of the FC, and knowing that there was not agreement on that document in the PC, was made by the secret faction. The exclusion of a member of the FC from the decision and the distribution of an internal document without his knowledge, in light of recent events, must be viewed as a step toward a split. The split wing of the secret faction at least from nine months ago initiated both an attempt to change the program of the League, and at the same time, a preparation for an imposed split.

From the very beginning of the internal discussion, and later, with the formation of the Permanent Revolution Tendency, the secret faction, instead of coming forth with a clear political platform, has resorted to labeling as cliquist any comrade who has expressed agreement with the Points of Difference in the Sattar League. To this label-- which has no other aim but to confuse the minds of comrades and divert the internal discussion from its political course-- was added the slander "split danger" caused by the Permanent Revolution Tendency. Even in the document Political Anatomy of Ahmad Heydari's Tendency (this document, dated January 10, 1977, was distributed for the first time on January 26, that is, after the expulsion of comrades Hakimi and Gilani), the slander is raised that "Ahmad Heydari's group" is posing a "split danger." But, no evidence is provided to the entire League proving this claim. (James Cannon said once: "Did anybody anywhere ever organize a split without accusing the other side of such designs?") On the other hand, up to now, none of the recorded facts which we have documented have been questioned by anyone in the League.

The fundamental aim of the Permanent Revolution Faction is to stop the split which has already begun with the unprincipled expulsion of two comrades. We will fight to maintain the principled unity of the Sattar League.

After four months of waiting the first part of a document by comrades Bahman, Farviz, Hossein and Cyrus has now been distributed, making clearer the points of difference. Our proposal to the comrades of the secret faction is that they come out in the open, and, on the basis of their documents organize themselves openly within the League and participate in the discussion. This is the norm and the tradition of our movement. We propose that a date be set for holding the congress of the Sattar League and that political resolutions be submitted for discussion and put to a vote. The Permanent Revolution Faction is preparing such a resolution.

The Permanent Revolution Faction is organized inside the Sattar League on the basis of the organizational norms of the Fourth International. Comrades who wish to become members of this faction must be exemplary cadres in their activities and in their attitude, as well as in fulfilling their financial obligations. As an organized and disciplined faction inside the Sattar League, we abide by the discipline of the majority in advancing our political line.

We will attempt to win the majority of the League to our side. Just as our perspective for holding a national conference of Payam Daneshjoo as a step in the direction of building a Trotskyist youth movement is becoming more and more acceptable to the comrades of the League, we are confident of our success in winning over the majority to our other political positions. That is why we are for a calm and democratic atmosphere for discussion, and that is also why we have organized ourselves against a split.

Maintaining the unity of the League and driving back the centrifugal and split tendencies necessitate a conscious and consistent struggle. The Permanent Revolution Faction accepts this challenge. In order to prevent a split we will use all the League's internal, as well as its international resources. We are willing to block with all comrades who are only willing to prevent a split. In case it does become necessary in the carrying out of our fight for the maintenance of the League's unity against all expulsions and against a split we will appeal to the highest body of the International, its congress.

Platform of the Permanent Revolution Faction

The Permanent Revolution Faction is organized on the basis of the general program of the Fourth International, the positions of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction and the general line of the document, Points of Difference in the Sattar League.

We confirm the aims of the Permanent Revolution Tendency:

1) For the correction of the theoretical and programmatic errors in the document, Our Present Tasks.

2) For the drafting of the program of the Sattar League.

3) For a clear and all-sided evaluation of our tasks, perspectives, and organizational principles under our present special conditions.

4) For the creation of a calm and democratic atmosphere in the internal discussion. And for the carrying through of the discussion in a political manner, up to the organizing of a democratic congress of the League.

To the above aims we add the following:

5) For the immediate repeal by the Political Committee of the decision to expel comrades Hassan Hakimi and Heydar Gilani.

6) For the convening of a special plenum of the National Committee to review the expulsions and prevent the drive of the secret faction toward a split.

7) For the setting of the date of the congress of the Sattar League.

Tooran Ostovar, Nader Afra, Nader Javadi, Ahmad Heydari, Nasser Khoshnevis, Nariman Razm, Rahmat Farnood, Fariba Qasemi, Farhad Koochek, Ghazanfar Galharoodi, Azar Gilak.

* From the transcription of the tapes of the January 16, 1977 meeting in Austin.

** Appendix to Against Threats and Victimizations in the Internal Discussion, By Ahmad Heydari, December 20, 1976.

*** Appendix to Against Threats and Victimizations in the Internal Discussion.

**** The Sequence of Events in the Internal Discussion, an appendix to Against Threats and Victimizations in the Internal Discussion.

It is becoming clear to a greater number of students that nothing short of the Iranian revolution will free Iranian society from the yoke of monarchy and imperialism. Thus the questions regarding the nature of the revolution, making of a revolution, and linking up the present conditions of the class struggle with the revolution has occupied, to a large extent, the minds and discussions of Iranian students. World experience regarding this question is certainly very educational. And today, more than ever, the thoughts of the Iranian student have been preoccupied by this global question. The process of the world revolution teaches that the most effective way to realize the revolution is through the formation and consolidation of the program and the general strategy for mass struggle. This is possible only through gathering a revolutionary cadre around the strategy of the revolution, inside the revolutionary party.

How to use the lessons and experiences of the world revolution in order to advance the historical struggle of the national movement at its present stage? The lessons of the world revolution, in regards to today's struggle, must be applied through the best and the most effective means. This is the most central issue of the discussion put forward in this document--a discussion that this document initiates only as an introduction.

The social and political situation of Iran in the past twenty-three years--since the coup in August 1953--is indicative of the fact that monarchy and imperialism are incapable of solving the fundamental issues of Iranian society, although they have attempted to destroy any and all kinds of opposition. The economic and social backwardness and extreme political repression reflect, in a broad historical framework, global brakes to stop the historical march of humanity. World capitalism must do this or else it will be destroyed. A stock pile of economic statistics clearly indicates the backward reality of the Iranian society. It is a reality known to the great majority of Iranian students. The historical problem of progress vs. backwardness, in relation to all semi-colonial countries, is posed by whether or not to remain within the world imperialist system or to cut off from it. The real picture of life in the past twenty-three years will be clear only if it is drawn in all of its dimensions. The problem of Iranian society is the rule of the shah over the people, but it is not only that; it is the rule of repression against all, but it is not only that. A world system--known to us as world imperialism--has imprisoned the Iranian society in its trap. Those responsible for the situation in Iran are not confined to the geographical framework of Iran. World capitalism is the main source of Iranian problems. The political repression in Iran is a means, a method and one of many forms that the rule of capital takes. Capitalism began its colonization of the backward and meager society of Iran in the middle of the last century. This became the roots of capitalist relations in Iran. So far along its historical path it has offered nothing but further and further degradation in all social, economic and cultural aspects. The his-

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torical backwardness of Iran, and the present political repression, is part of the plan of world capitalism for its own survival. In the face of this reality, and in order to escape from this historical inferno, revolutionary Marxism and the working class offer the only possible strategy. That is the transitional program for the socialist revolution in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism, a transitional program for the Iranian revolution. Completing the revolutionary program and its implementation, building the Sattar League and through that training of revolutionary cadre, are the central and historical tasks of the Iranian revolution. No possible short cut or leap forward exists along this path. We propose to discuss the essential characteristics of the Iranian revolution in order to better recognize the strategic position of our organization in the class fortification. There is no doubt that this clarification will show us the direction and make easier the construction of a transitional bridge towards mass action, one which spreads roots in the class struggle inside-the country.

1- The Backwardness of Iran and Program for Socialist Revolution.

The Iranian society is a backward society. However, this backwardness exists and is real: Iran is a part of the world capitalist system and a part dominated by world imperialism. For this reason the development of such a society takes place in a combined way: traditionally backward economic factors are combined with the latest economic and cultural techniques of modern capitalism. This general order is the social texture of Iranian society in the epoch of the proletarian revolution. In Iran, the worldwide contradiction between capital and labor is not manifested in a clear way. World capitalism has dominated the backward social system of Iran and created a "backward" Iranian capitalism. On the one hand, the Iranian working class is still a small class, young and inexperienced. The majority of society has to still depend on the most primitive modes of production and distribution, living as peasants on the land. The intelligensia, who played a role as propagandists of capitalism in the fields of science, culture, philosophy, and morality over the past two centuries is hampered professionally. In Iran, the science and the culture of this layer is considered irrelevant. Nor is it able to promote a moral and subjective system to "relax the spirit" of the toilers. Yet this is only one of the social poles of Iranian society.

On the other hand, representatives of world capitalism use the throne of monarchy to enforce their rule. The law of capitalist profit-making and exploitation is combined with the law of historic absolutism from an Asiatic primitive epoch. The chaos of the capitalist productive system is combined with the traditional, absolute power of monarchy. The capitalist system with all its inherent laws god like, and with its profit system the king of the present world society, comes to plead the help of another king in Iran.

It is in this way that the contradictory economic structure of capital and labor takes its form in Iran. The social development

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of Iran has further intertwined these social characteristics. Monarchy and capitalism have been further combined, therefore strengthening the ugly and contradictory face of the ruling class in Iran. The proletariat and the peasantry have been placed more and more along the same historical path; and so with the lower layers of urban petty bourgeoisie. In order to further develop and progress, society must be diverted more and more from the path of capitalism and Iranian monarchy.

The historical backwardness of the present Iranian society will serve as the springboard for throwing the society out of the capitalist orbit. The question of Iran's social development, as well as the length of the struggle between capitalism and the socialist revolution, hangs on the gatetop of history. The Trotskyist movement offers the only possible clear analysis and answer in this regard. The only way out of the present difficulties of the Iranian society is the socialist revolution. This historic breakthrough will solve all the burning and immediate social problems and make possible social and cultural progress.

2- Solving the Democratic Problems Is the Essential Task of the Iranian Revolution.

The social composition of Iran, mentioned before, will also give form to the political demands of the working class. Achievement of the most elementary democratic and human rights will be combined with demands for the right to strike and workers' control. The working class, having not yet built its trade unions, is confronted with the task of building soviets. The nonexistence of different political parties will confront the radicalized working class with the task of joining and building the revolutionary party. Sooner or later, with the same urgency that the working class will be able to wage an independent political fight, the whole of the transitional program for socialist revolution will be actually implemented.

The period between the end of World War II and the coup of 1953 was perfect proof of this fact. Different sections of the young working class, not yet having built their trade unions, were confronted with many fundamental social problems. The working class was the only force who could turn the pages of history in the interest of toilers. When the question of the right of self-determination of Iranian nationalities was posed, the broad masses of workers could join that struggle on a national scale. When the existence of the Turkish and Kurdish nationalities was being threatened by the monarchy and its army in Azar 21 (December 1946), the working class could have turned the whole situation around. Similarly, in the struggles for free elections, nationalization of the oil industry, the peasantry's land question, etc., the working class could and must have counterposed its own program to that of the monarchy and the state. Unfortunately, the obstacles

of Stalinism and the liberal bourgeoisie stood between the workers and other oppressed layers, paving the road to the coup of 1953. Events of that period, however, showed that there is not a historical period separating elementary and trade union struggles of the workers, and the struggles relating to the whole transitional program for the Iranian revolution; one leads to the other.

Democratic tasks, transitional demands, and the problems of the socialist revolution in Iran are not divided into separate historical epochs, but stem directly from one another. Solving the democratic problems--such as the agrarian revolution and national independence, which embodies the liberation of the oppressed nationalities as well--are the essential issues of Iranian society. Therefore the fundamental axis around which the Iranian revolution rotates is the solving of democratic problems. The broad mass struggle to solve the agrarian problem and to uproot imperialist penetration will pose the question of taking power by the working class. Belittling the democratic program and thus dividing the socialist revolution on the one hand and agrarian problem and getting rid of imperialism on the other into two separate historical periods is a mistake of blind ultraleftism. The solving of democratic problems of Iranian society will necessitate the socialist revolution.

Posing the democratic problems in the course of class confrontation in Iran, will, in fact, show the hegemony of the working class in the field of class struggle. The Iranian working class, which itself is a minority, will, in the course of struggle for democratic rights, unite the majority of people in the struggle and achieve the leadership of the nation. Rejecting the democratic program of the Iranian revolution, doubting its strategic importance, belittling the social explosiveness of achieving these trampled-upon rights, is, in fact, rejecting and doubting the boiler of the Iranian revolution. As a general rule the flow and pressure of ultraleftism, which is very much felt at the present stage of struggle, is an indication of the lack of understanding on the part of different political forces about the very center of gravity, and therefore direction, of the Iranian revolution. The dynamic forces of the Iranian revolution are the worker and the peasant. The dynamic issues of the Iranian revolution are the strangled democratic issues. Freedom, democracy and independence are engraved on the agenda of class struggle in Iran. Through these concepts history will tell the reality of the Iranian social revolution, and the task of the revolutionary Marxist is the serious and consistent understanding of this historic reality.

Monarchy and imperialism are determined to guard, and make last, capitalism in Iran. They, therefore, resort to violence, repression, barbarism and murder. Capital's law of profitmaking is armed with monarchy's absolutism, not because of a historical misunderstanding, not because of a historical accident, but out of the need to establish and continue capitalism. Making capitalism last in Iran necessitates the political repression of the Pahlavi regime. For almost a century political repression has been the central weapon of monarchy and imperialism in their rule, guaranteeing

the existence of the social and economic system in Iran by trampling upon the democratic rights demanded by the broad masses. The impotence of the oppressed social classes and layers in their confrontations to achieve all democratic rights is understandable only within the historic framework of the ups and downs of the class struggle. This weakness in the camp of the working class can not be overcome through political-theatrical acts, or bold individual actions, or even through agitation and propaganda for the program of revolutionary forces. The giant social forces in action will at any moment pose the various aspects of social contradictions between the interests of the broad masses and those of monarchy and imperialism. And it will be this same monarchy and same imperialism that will, at last, force the broad masses to choose the road to revolution. It is essential to understand the characteristics and traits of the Iranian revolution. And for this purpose, the central guidelines are the historic school of the workers movement on a world scale, as well as the central lessons drawn from the two defeated Iranian revolutions.

The meaning of the impotence of capitalism in solving historic problems of the Iranian society is, in fact, the ability of the working class. Apart from these two fundamental forces--labor and capital--there are no other independent and fundamental forces within the structure of capitalism. The struggle for freedom of thought, of free elections to parliament, are attempts of the working class to overthrow the social system of monarchy and imperialism in Iran. These struggles are in no way "liberal," and they are not the property of the bourgeoisie. Bourgeois democracy, on the world scale, is not able to tolerate the conflicts and tension of the class struggle in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism. In the past, by discussing the role of the National Front we have dealt with this question.

Posing, developing and solving the democratic problems will be the factors which will cause the release of the revolutionary energy of the broad masses of the oppressed. The central task of the Iranian revolution is the solving of the agrarian problems and the uprooting of imperialism. We must stick to this historic outlook and develop our programmatic views and activities in this framework.

Our program and general strategy for the Iranian revolution contains the reality of Iranian society as well as the historic interests of the working class. Mass involvement of the workers, peasants, students, women, and oppressed nationalities in Iran will bring to the field of action the different parts of our revolutionary program. The central task is to develop the transitional program for mass action for the millions and millions. At the time when the struggle of oppressed nationalities to gain rights to their national language, or the right to self-determination of millions of Kurds, Azerbaijanis, Arabs, and Baluchies, are waged in the streets; at the time when the struggle for human rights, freedom of the press, publication, elections and trade unions will attain a mass proportion by the millions; at the time when Iranian women will move in their millions to wage a concrete fight against different aspects of their extreme

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oppression under the backward monarchial society, then it will be the parts of our revolutionary program and our general strategy which will be taken up on a mass scale.

3- Ripening of the Conditions to Overcome the Historic Defeat of August 1953

With the coup in August 1953 the victory thus achieved by the monarchy and imperialism imposed the rule of colonialism and exploitation over the Iranian people for a rather long period of time. The central cause of that defeat was the historical crisis of the leadership of the working class. The understanding of the whole process of the historic detour, which resulted on a world scale from the strengthening of Stalinism following World War II, will shed further light on the meaning of that defeat. Today's world situation is qualitatively different than that following World War II. The change which has occurred in the world situation will put all political tendencies contending for the leadership of the working class to new and fundamental tests. Every political force is confronted with the task of correctly analyzing and deriving the necessary political conclusions. And at the same time the conditions of the class struggle throughout the world are undergoing constant change.

Keeping in mind all probabilities, we will witness the continued turn towards classical forms of class struggle in the semi-colonial world. That is the revival of mass struggle of city workers against the state and its ruling class. Examples over the past few years illustrate the general rule in the future. We have especially discussed the question of nationalism in Iran and the question of oppressed nationalities. The questions will not vanish nor will they occupy a secondary and sideline status. On the contrary, the national question and nationalities in Iran will present themselves with greater emphasis. Other questions that mobilized broad masses in the two previous Iranian revolutions will return to the stage of class struggle but a hundred times more forcefully. Most probably, with the creation of Rastakhiz [Iran's sole legal party] and the shah's coercive apparatus the struggle for free elections will occupy a greater place in the minds of the masses of people.

The advance of revolution, in all three parts of the world, has created a harmony in the whole process of the world revolution, and has therefore eliminated many national barriers, at least on the level of thinking. The forgotten coup of 1953 and the crimes of the CIA and its American government are being recalled and discussed by the Iranian public because of the struggle against repression in Iran.

In Iran, the monarchy's policies, in order to maintain "stability and durability," are further and further taking the road of absolute and barbaric repression. But under present conditions, although the extreme political repression has the same meaning and anatomy as before, the repression can also be a factor to motivate an opposition. This is completely evident in the broad worldwide movement against Iranian repression. The front that exposes the shah's crimes is becoming more consolidated every day. Our experience is complete

decisive disintegration of the Confederation and our increasing penetration in the student circles.

Our efforts in turning the Confederation into an organization of actual struggle against the shah was faced with the Stalinist and National Frontist opposition. Bureaucratic expulsions, accusations, slanders, falsifications and physical confrontations and other such methods used against us by the leadership of the Confederation put many parts of our political program in a more distinguishable position, as compared with the positions of other forces. In all of these cases, the program of revolutionary Marxism became a channel through which the traditions of the national movement was reflected. Thus those traditions which had been forgotten in the minds of the broad student masses, by the shah's repression, and by Stalinism, once again returned.

Right now, as a result of this several-year fight, our leadership position in the movement against repression has placed us directly against the shah and imperialism. All our political enemies have suffered a great deal from the split in the Confederation, each in their own way. The present situation outside Iran and our position in the struggle against repression have very much intensified the clash of strategies among revolutionary Marxists, Stalinists and the representatives of bourgeois democracy, both on the level of practical activities and political and theoretical views. Although the Stalinists and National Frontists, in comparison with us, possess greater human and material forces, all indications show the possibilities of our outdistancing these forces through the broad mobilization of the student movement abroad. The present situation has created many possibilities for us and has opened up to us the period of agitation, propaganda and organization. To exploit these possibilities we must intensify all aspects of the Sattar League's activities.

To prepare for this situation, it is necessary for us to completely understand our tasks in the coming period.

The central question of the class struggle in Iran is the monarchy's political repression. Our struggle for freedom of political prisoners and to stop repression in Iran is one of the cornerstones of the last two Iranian revolutions. The essence of the struggle to achieve Edalat Khaneh [House of Justice] was the same. Although in Iran today there are not thousands of people involved in such struggle, as soon as they hear the news of this struggle not only do they understand it, but they try to support it in any way they can. For active participation of each person, the struggle has the material and moral support of tens of others. Vibrations of this worldwide struggle against repression will, sooner or later, penetrate in every area of the Iranian society which is affected by repression. All the glories of the shah's monarchy will be pushed aside by the pressure of protests against repression, and the true face of the regime of terror will be seen. Our critics protest that the struggle to achieve human rights is "liberal and utopian humanism." In fact, at the present situation, the struggle against repression is the most revolutionary demand that could be raised.

also left intact the agrarian question. Nevertheless, Mossadegh's regime was the rule of the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie. Before the coup bourgeois democracy, with the help and on the basis of broad mass pressure, had democratized social affairs in many aspects of society. The defeat inflicted on the broad masses in 1953 meant that the liberal bourgeoisie had also packed up its bag and quit. Because, from then on, capitalism chose to rule through the monarchy. The mass movement had been smashed, and capitalism had no need of the liberal bourgeoisie. The mass of students on the level of their own understanding and experience preferred bourgeois democracy to the dictatorial repression. Students were faced, on a broad scale, with the issue of democratic rights vs. the pressures of repression. The left wing of the students organized around the axis of activity against Iranian repression. In fact, the Confederation, under the leadership of political enemies of the working class--Stalinism and National bourgeoisie--fulfilled this need.

The Confederation, under the leadership of Stalinist forces and ideologues of Iranian bourgeois democracy (remnants of the National Front), and as long as it was actually fighting the shah over the essential questions facing the society, attracted many people. Then the Stalinists and National Frontists got the upper hand in the organization and pushed the Confederation, more and more, towards a political organization marked by their ultraleftism. The front of practical struggle turned into a front of heterogeneous and politically-clashing views. This shattered the Confederation, as a student organization, into pieces. The split reflected the demarcation lines of the political forces in the leadership of the Confederation. Today, each of these pieces, claiming that "we are the Confederation," follow the programs of their own political organization. Even though the remnants of the Confederation are shoved aside from the center of struggle of the student movement, we should carefully follow all developments in the line of these political forces, which are our political enemies.

Our intervention in the student movement, which took place through activities within the Confederation as well as outside of it, in the student associations, soon bore fruit. Neither our expulsion from the Confederation, nor its withering away, hurt our organization and our activities. Our consistency in defense of political prisoners, and our principled fights against all bureaucratic maneuvers of Stalinists and National Frontists, guaranteed our success in this relatively short, but stormy, period. Our expulsion from the Confederation showed to what degree the Confederation had turned its back on the aims of the anti-shah struggle, and to what degree its leadership was bankrupt and degenerate. The split in the Confederation has removed this completely degenerated obstacle, and therefore strengthened the student movement. By splitting the Confederation the Stalinists and National Frontists have committed a progressive act. Our participation in and organization of defense activities, and the spreading of our ideas through Payam Daneshjoo, while the Confederation was disintegrating, doubled our influence in the student movement. The recent, relatively strong wave of attacks on our defense meetings by these forces has registered the

decisive disintegration of the Confederation and our increasing penetration in the student circles.

Our efforts in turning the Confederation into an organization of actual struggle against the shah was faced with the Stalinist and National Frontist opposition. Bureaucratic expulsions, accusations, slanders, falsifications and physical confrontations and other such methods used against us by the leadership of the Confederation put many parts of our political program in a more distinguishable position, as compared with the positions of other forces. In all of these cases, the program of revolutionary Marxism became a channel through which the traditions of the national movement was reflected. Thus those traditions which had been forgotten in the minds of the broad student masses, by the shah's repression, and by Stalinism, once again returned.

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The left wing of the student movement is organized around the struggle against repression. In every place where there are Iranian students the possibilities for building committees to defend political prisoners exist. The activities and publications of CAIFI will centralize this struggle and make organizing such committees easy. In the fight for freedom of political prisoners we must pay attention to the slightest tendency for unity in the actual struggle that comes from other political forces.

The world situation has provided possibilities to wage such a struggle. Our struggle, up to now, has proven the fruitfulness of our defense of political prisoners. Although the most critical question of the Iranian revolution is the continuing crisis in the leadership of the working class, today, after the past half century, the possibilities of overcoming the crisis of leadership exist in a real sense. The intensity of the crisis of working-class leadership is clearer now than ever before. The lack of a Leninist party is the biggest obstacle to the victory of world revolution, and consequently the Iranian revolution. All political forces in the opposition, from the Maoists to Tudeh [Moscow-oriented Stalinists] to National Frontists, or "independent Marxists" have shown their bankruptcy again and again. All these forces are still following the tortuous road of their politics.

To be clear on the principled questions of the revolution, the method of the transitional program, and the strategy for building the Leninist party is our main capital. No one except committed and believing Leninists is going to build the Leninist party. No other tool will be able to solve the crisis of the working class. The victory of the Iranian revolution necessitates the building of a Leninist party, and consequently building of the Sattar League--this is the road we want to follow.

Internal Discussion

POINTS OF DIFFERENCE IN THE SATTAR LEAGUE

by Ahmad Heydari
September 28, 1976

The document distributed by the comrades of the Political Committee contains two essential parts. The first, comprising more than half the document, relates to the theoretical and programatic issues of the Iranian revolution; and the second, among other issues, poses the present tasks and perspectives of the Sattar League. But the central theme of the document, as mentioned in the beginning, is the issue posed in the first part: "How to use the lessons and experiences of the world revolution in order to advance the historical struggle of the national movement at its present stage? The lessons of the world revolution, in regards to today's struggle, must be applied through the best and most effective means. This is the most central issue of the discussion put forward in this document...."

I will also deal with this part first.

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION

The document of the PC comrades correctly emphasizes that "the solving of democratic problems is the essential task of the Iranian revolution" and "the fundamental axis around which the Iranian revolution rotates is the solving of democratic problems" and "the dynamic issues of the Iranian revolution are the strangled democratic issues." And at the same time, the document states that "the only way out of the present difficulties of the Iranian society is the socialist revolution" or that "solving of democratic problems of the Iranian society will necessitate the socialist revolution." But nowhere in the document is it explained why.

The socialist revolution means overturning capitalist relations of production, a change in the substructure of society. Democratic problems, however, are not problems of substructure, but of superstructure. Why then "solving of democratic problems of the Iranian society will necessitate the socialist revolution"? This question is left unanswered in the document of the PC comrades.

It seems that the document attempts to discuss the transitional program on backward countries in relation to Iran. However, in my opinion, the contents of the document are generalities, and concepts like socialist revolution are posed in the abstract. The text of the document is unclear, and ideas are sporadic and cliché-like. A thorough study of the document shows that concepts do not relate to one another in a rational pattern so the general picture is incoherent. In my opinion, instead of all these, the document could have started simply by stating in one sentence that the Iranian revolution is a permanent revolution.

Or it could have translated the first four paragraphs in that chapter of Trotsky's Transitional Program which discusses the backward countries. In that case, the document would have been more correct and clearer.

According to Trotsky, the central idea in the theory of the permanent revolution "is the transition from democratic revolution to the socialist." But in the PC comrades' document there is no mention at all of the democratic revolution. It is only the socialist revolution which is introduced repeatedly as the solvent of democratic problems. Does that mean that a democratic revolution has lost its meaning as far as the Iranian revolution is concerned? If so, we are faced with a new theory which says: the Iranian revolution is a socialist revolution and the solving of democratic problems is its essential task! Or: the Iranian revolution is a socialist revolution and the fundamental axis around which it rotates is the solving of democratic problems! Or: the Iranian revolution is a socialist revolution and its dynamic issues are the strangled democratic issues! Whatever this theory may be, it is not the theory of the permanent revolution with its central idea being "transition from democratic *Revolution to The Socialist.*" The insistence in the PC comrades' document that it is possible to pose the socialist revolution without discussing the democratic revolution and explaining the transitional process has led to an idealistic presentation of the socialist revolution.

Trotsky writes in the Transitional Program that "Only they (soviets) are capable of bringing the democratic revolution to a conclusion and likewise opening an era of socialist revolution." Thus the democratic and socialist revolutions are the two poles of the same revolutionary process, between which the working class carries out a conscious intervention and brings about a qualitative change in the substructure of the society. In order for this process of permanent revolution to be victorious it is necessary for the proletariat to assume the leadership of the democratic revolution and to establish its dictatorship. This is the central issue on whose successful solution we should concentrate, constructing the revolutionary strategy on that basis.

Imperialism, monarchy and the remnants of pre-capitalist relations on the land are obstacles which collide with the development--capitalist development--of the productive forces in Iran. From this reality flows the fundamental democratic tasks, i.e., national independence, liberation of the oppressed nationalities and the agrarian revolution. And it is this collision which forms the material basis for the democratic revolution.

On the other hand, the Iranian proletariat is growing fast. This makes possible its independent political struggles and its capacity to organize a broad Leninist party. But the

Iranian industrial proletariat still comprise about ten percent of the population and is therefore a small minority. For the revolutionary victory of the Iranian proletariat it is necessary that in opposition to the bourgeoisie its allies be mobilized for the democratic revolution. At their head the proletariat will be able to bring to conclusion the democratic revolution and likewise open an era of socialist revolution.

In the process of the democratic revolution in Iran the most important allies of the proletariat are the oppressed nationalities. This is an objective reality which remains muffled if the concept of the democratic revolution is omitted from the coming Iranian revolution, and leads to a confusion in the revolutionary strategy of the proletariat.

NATIONALITIES AND WOMEN

The PC comrades' document claims that: "It is essential to understand the characteristics and traits of the Iranian revolution. And for this purpose, the central guidelines are the historic school of the workers movement on a world scale, as well as the central lessons drawn from the two defeated Iranian revolutions." And it promises to "discuss the essential characteristics of the Iranian revolution." What are the essential characteristics of the Iranian revolution? What characteristics and traits differentiate the Iranian revolution from those of other backward countries? Unfortunately the document poses the question without providing a concrete answer for it. Therefore things remain on the level of generalities. But the answer is perfectly clear: the most important characteristic of the Iranian revolution is the existence of the oppressed nationalities who have played essential roles in the past two Iranian revolutions. This reality must be accounted for in the strategy of the proletariat for the taking of state power. The economic developments of the past decade have forced an increasing number of members of these nationalities to leave their villages and join the ranks of the proletariat. And because of the national oppression they face, they constitute the most exploited section of the growing proletariat. The bourgeoisie of these nationalities, on the other hand, are not nationalist, nor do they pretend to be--contrary to the nationalism of the Persian bourgeoisie. Therefore, the liberation of these nationalities is linked more clearly to proletarian rule. The oppressed nationalities of Iran, who comprise the majority of Iranian people--and who are even concentrated in Persian cities (in Tehran there are more than one million Azarbijanians) where they have gone in search of work--are one of the most essential allies of the proletariat. The struggle against their double oppression--class exploitation plus national oppression--is a central dynamic force of the coming Iranian revolution. The document distributed by the PC comrades ~~not only~~ does not pose the question in this

way. In its first section, entitled The Backwardness of Iran and the Program for Socialist Revolution--the section in which we were supposed to discuss "the essential characteristics of the Iranian revolution"--does not even mention the oppressed nationalities.

In the document, women, like oppressed nationalities, are forgotten in the program for revolution. This huge revolutionary force is referred to in one sentence only, and that is all! **BUT** the revolutionary importance of women as a force is being posed with ever more urgency. On the one hand, the development of capitalism in Iran takes women out of the house to factories and schools. More and more women step out of the confining house to become active in a wide variety of social life. And, on the other hand, the masculine social order presses upon women workers a double exploitation. That same order confronts all women, at every step, with violations of their most elementary rights, and shows women their degradation. Thus, the number of women workers is increasing, and at the same time women as a whole are coming to be one of the most powerful allies of the proletariat.

In the beginning of the PC comrades' document it is stated: "The lessons of the world revolution, in regards to today's struggles, must be applied through the best and most effective means. This is the most central issue of the discussion put forward in this document...." One of the lessons of the world revolution is learned through the women's liberation movement. The LTF political resolution adopted by the Sattar League in the Summer of 1975 (which is to be published by Fanus) states:

"The struggle of women against their oppression tends to develop in an anticapitalist direction, and is a potentially powerful ally of the working class as a whole in the struggle for socialism. Struggles by women against their oppression provide an avenue to reach and mobilize the most exploited and oppressed layers of the working class. They help to break the stranglehold of reactionary bourgeois ideology, and are part of the battle to educate, publicize and mobilize the entire class around the needs and demands of the most exploited layers."

Although the spreading ideas of the women's liberation movement among the young women in Iran is in its early stages, it is a new and essential factor in their awakening and rebellion. In the multi-national country of Iran the tendency for the combining of the struggle for women's liberation with the struggles of the working class was shown in the Azarbijan revolution of 1945-46. The LTF resolution, referring to such a tendency, states:

"A similarly important interrelationship between the women's liberation movement and the proletarian revolution is offered by the struggle for national liberation. But this struggle itself moves towards

socialism in search of final solutions to the problems that have created it. Consequently women involved in national liberation movements are drawn in the direction of revolutionary socialism. They see socialism as a triple revolution--against wage slavery, against sexism, against national oppression."

It should be emphasized that male chauvinism, like Persian chauvinism, is a weapon in the hands of capitalists to create division among the working class. And the struggle for the liberation of Iran's oppressed nationalities and the liberation of women are struggles to unite the proletariat. And a united proletariat is the necessary prerequisite for victory in the coming revolution. It should also be emphasized that without the serious help of the oppressed nationalities and women, the most powerful allies of the proletariat, the Iranian proletariat will not be able to take state power.

These are the most concrete and most important points of the transitional program which are not discussed in "the program for socialist revolution" in the PC comrades' document. The treatment given in that document to oppressed nationalities and women indicates a retreat in our transitional program from these points. The generalities, incoherence and complexity of the document creates a cover that hides this programmatic retreat.

WRITERS AND ARTISTS

Writers, poets and artists in Iran have a particular social status. This is based both on the old traditions in literature, especially Persian literature, and the fact that since the Constitutional revolution they have had an orientation toward the masses. The works of those poets and writers which are anti-dictatorial and reflect the real life of the deprived Iranian people have found receptive ears among the population, thus frightening the regime. The increasing number of writers and poets, who in the past fifty years have been imprisoned, executed or mysteriously destroyed by the regime, speaks to this fact. During the whole period since the coup of 1953 the Iranian Writers Union was the only open, progressive organization which battled against censorship. In the past decade, despite repression and censorship, writers and poets came forward, especially from the masses of oppressed nationalities and women, and in their writings echoed the rebellious voice of these oppressed masses. For example, Samad Behrangi and Frough Farokhzad (who died mysteriously).

Around the axis of defending writer- and poet-political prisoners CAIFI came into existence. And the expansion of its successful struggle against repression has been linked directly with the cooperation of members of this layer. Extreme repression not only imprisons militant writers and artists, but it also strangles their works. Therefore,

with our serious orientation towards writers and artists, our activity in CAIFI and ABJAD constitutes one of the most important aspects of our work. Through working with writers and artists we have established an organic link with Iran--at present this is our only link inside Iran. The importance of our orientation towards writers and artists is verified by the favorable reception given to CAIFI and ABJAD by writers and students--including students at the University of Tehran--and other indications that we hear about more and more. (The successful international boycott of the Shiraz festival is one, and indications that the shah is worried about CAIFI's far-reaching publicity against repression is another.) And this is only the beginning. In the document of the PC comrades there is no mention at all of the writers and artists and their social importance in Iran, our orientation, and our tasks and perspectives in this regard. Such belittling of our work in this important area could lessen our intervention among this important layer. It could also let all of our gains, achieved in recent years through consistent work in this field, go with the wind.

THE STUDENTS ABROAD AND PERSPECTIVES FOR BUILDING A TROTSKYIST YOUTH ORGANIZATION

Iranian students are coming out of the country to continue their studies in unprecedented numbers. Among all countries the United States is the most attractive to these students. Tens of thousands of Iranian students are now studying in American universities and their numbers are increasing fast. Last summer students would spend whole nights in front of the American embassy in Tehran in order to speed up the process of obtaining visas for the U.S. Each day 200-300 visas were issued at the embassy.

The reasons for so many students coming abroad is not that they want to hurriedly finish their higher education, return to Iran and seek high posts and salaries in Iranian "finance capital." They are not in such a hurry to return. The majority of them, in fact, escape the all-sided repression of the Iranian society and wander around in search of individual liberation. With such a background, Iranian students are influenced by the international youth radicalization, and become interested in political education and activity.

From the 1960s on the Iranian students abroad have played an essential role. Student associations were organized on the basis of exposing the shah's repression. These were later organized into the Confederation of Iranian Students (outside Iran). In its early years the Confederation organized extensive activities to expose the regime and to defend political prisoners. Such activities resulted in some initial successes, attracting more students.

From about ten years ago, the malaise of ultraleftism, spreading among international youth, infected the Confederation too. Maoism grew. The National Front (II) abroad, under these pressures, succumbed to ultraleftism. Gradually the

defense of political prisoners gave way to other, "more revolutionary" programs, and the Confederation turned into a battlefield for Maoist and ultraleft bourgeois nationalists. Thus, by having been diverted from the democratic program-- defense of political prisoners being at the top of the list-- the Confederation ended up in splits and then more splits. Each split-off group set up their own Confederation, their most important function being either to publicize guerilla actions or to denounce "soviet social imperialism." So far none of these confederations have shown any signs of a healthy development.

Because of all these splits, the name, Confederation, has lost its attraction for students. And those students who have contacts with various Confederations, lose their interest in them because of each group's ultraleftism, internal repressive atmosphere, low political level, and the factional struggles that go on. The influence of Maoism has been reduced among students because of these splits, and as a result anti-Trotskyist propaganda also has a reduced impact. Today the perspective for the expansion of Trotskyist ideas among students is better than ever before.

We, on the basis of the practical program of defending political prisoners, participated in the Confederation. We also stood for an open and democratic atmosphere in which the issues of the Iranian revolution would be freely discussed and different points of view presented without the Confederation necessarily taking a position on those views. The Maoists and the ultraleft bourgeois nationalists who were in the leadership of the Confederation did not want our ideas to be presented to the students. And because of their ultraleft sectarian attitude they were opposed to a broad defense of political prisoners. With all kinds of slanders they created a poisoned atmosphere against us, preventing a serious discussion from taking place. The different factions in the leadership of the Confederation formed an unprincipled block against us, and expelled our co-thinkers from the organization. During this period, wherever it was possible, we attracted the most serious and independent-minded student militants to our program for building the Confederation. And after the expulsion Payam Daneshjoo (Student Message) became the independent voice of the expelled students.

Thus, a new and independent political tendency with Trotskyist ideas appeared among students abroad. Despite the expectation of their political opponents, the supporters of Payam Daneshjoo did not vanish from the scene. Because they defended CAIFI's right to exist and tried to expand its activities, they gained a special, leading status among the students who were defending political prisoners. By continuing the publication of Payam Daneshjoo the expelled students were able to have their political ideas reach other students. All anti-shah activists were invited to participate in an exchange of ideas. Not only was the news of CAIFI activities against the shah's repression reported, and that news became a guideline for further student activity, but Payam Daneshjoo also published the regime-banned works of Iran's revolutionary writers. This exciting combination of articles, with a principled method

and a rich content, made Payam Daneshjoo the best Iranian paper.

Payam Daneshjoo's history has always been accompanied by struggle. In the early 1960s, when the student movement was reviving in Iranian universities from the coup of 1953, Payam Daneshjoo was published by the student militants at the University of Tehran. It was apparently founded by Bijan Jazani (due to increasing repression unleashed in 1963 it ceased publication). In 1972 Payam Daneshjoo was revived by some Iranian students at the University of Texas (Austin), who were elected to the leadership of their association after waging a political fight with the supporters of the regime. Two years later, when the Maoists, in the name of the Confederation, and by bureaucratic methods, took over the leadership of the association they silenced Payam Daneshjoo in the repression that followed. The internal struggle within the association ended with the expulsion of the student militants, including supporters of Payam Daneshjoo. The magazine was again revived and expanded.

In the past two years groups of supporters of Payam Daneshjoo have emerged in different places. Programatically, these groups are in agreement with the Sattar League. They organize CAIFI activities in defense of political prisoners; they distribute books published by Fanus and Abjad; they put out their own bulletins, debating Maoists and National Frontists; they organize their own educational classes; and as a major tendency, they are generally involved in the local student political life. We have had a decisive role in the development of this process. The trend now being formed around the axis of Payam Daneshjoo is a developing one, and in it lies the prospects of building a Trotskyist youth organization. The Sattar League must seriously follow this, leading it forward with energy, initiative and audacity.

Helping organize, consolidate and expand groups of Payam Daneshjoo must be the axis of our activity in this period. Payam Daneshjoo is a legal and open magazine, this being a very important aspect. As much as it is possible groups of Payam Daneshjoo must also be open so that they can take advantage of all the opportunities there are. Along their present scope of activities, such groups could organize discussions around topics and articles in Payam Daneshjoo, and, wherever possible, set up bookstores and conduct regular weekly forums. Groups of Payam Daneshjoo can cooperate with other foreign students, particularly with Arab students around activities such as defense of the Palestinian revolution. They can work together with Trotskyist youth organizations such as the Young Socialist Alliance. Our work in attracting supporters of Payam Daneshjoo and building such groups must be done with a common aim in mind: preparation for holding a national conference of Payam Daneshjoo.

The PC comrades' document discusses the central importance of the struggle against repression in Iran, prospects for the expansion of this struggle, expansion of CAIFI and building

committees for the defense of political prisoners. These are completely correct and this document has no difference with them. There are no differences on the prospects for the Sattar League's growth either. But there is a difference regarding the axis of our work among the students. In the PC comrades' document, the axis of our activity is limited to building committees for defense of political prisoners. But it is silent on Payam Daneshjoo and its potentiality. Here I have tried to show that defense work can expand and become even more meaningful when it becomes a part of our all-sided orientation toward students.

Therefore, there are now two different lines proposed for the Sattar League's work among students. According to the line proposed in this document the axis of our work, at this period, among students abroad, is to help organize and lead supporters of Payam Daneshjoo, preparing for a national conference. We can therefore take steps along the road of organizing a Trotskyist youth organization. With the increase in circulation of Payam Daneshjoo, and all indications are that its circulation will pass the 2,000 mark shortly, comrades will have many candidates to invite to such a national conference of Payam Daneshjoo.

This kind of mass orientation toward students will give our defense of political prisoners broader dimensions, and also facilitate our contact with Iran.

This orientation will provide a broader arena in which the Sattar League can educate, propagandize and organize, recruiting the most serious students. This is a big step forward on the road to linking up with the students in Iran.

DISCUSSION IN THE SATTAR LEAGUE

With the distribution of the PC comrades' document, discussion is open in the Sattar League. Firstly, I feel it necessary to briefly explain why I have delayed in stating my views for the purpose of internal discussion. At the April 29 meeting of the Political Committee it was proposed that the PC comrades' document be distributed in the league. Since I had some differences with that document it was agreed that within a month's time I would formulate my views and then work with comrade Cyrus on a final draft. A week later, on May 6, I was unable to attend the meeting of the Political Committee because I had to work. In that meeting comrades decided not to wait for all the views within the Political Committee, but instead decided to go ahead and distribute the document after it was edited by comrade Cyrus. At that time I was not informed of this decision, and on the other hand the intended meeting with comrade Cyrus never took place. In August, during a conversation with a comrade living in another city, I found out accidentally that an edited version of the document had been distributed two

months earlier. (Apparently it was not distributed in every local. For example, it was not distributed in New York and I did not receive a copy of the edited version.) I brought up the issue at a meeting of the Political Committee (on August 23) and stated that in my opinion an error had been committed by the PC comrades. If the error was not corrected it would establish a dangerous precedent against democracy and the concept of team leadership within the Sattar League. Unfortunately, the majority of the PC comrades reaffirmed the May 6 decision, insisting that no error was committed in distributing the document. Furthermore, they added that in their opinion the document was a very fine one and that there was no need to reconsider it. Thus with the knowledge that there is a difference with the document, and at a time when a comrade with a different view was absent, some of the PC comrades had decided to edit the document and then distribute it. The comrade with the different view was not informed of this decision, but members of the league received the document under the impression that it represents the collective view of the whole Political Committee, and without knowing that other views exist. The method used by the PC comrades is an objective violation of the Leninist party-building norms, and it is alien to traditions of the Trotskyist movement. If this has been the attitude taken in regard to internal discussion, then the question is posed: what other decisions could be made over the head of the collective Political Committee in the future? The method used by the PC comrades, and their insistence in reaffirming their error, has posed the crucial question of democracy as one of the points of difference within the Sattar League. These comrades should explain their concept of democracy in the Sattar League.

Our internal discussion is taking place at a time when the situation for building the Sattar League is more favorable than ever. As a result of experience and the successes achieved in the past struggles, we have expanded. With this discussion we are preparing for our congress, which would be a big step forward for us. Now, on the basis of the two documents available to all members of the Sattar League, there are differences both in regard to theoretical and programmatic questions, as well as in the line for our future work. What is needed is a calm and democratic atmosphere so that there can be a political discussion on the different views. In the coming period of discussion of our program, it is democracy that should dominate. That will guarantee the healthy continuation of the discussion and make it possible for every member to write their own views for consideration. The successful continuation of this discussion up to the time of our congress, and the adoption of a document that would embody the views and activities of our organization, is a vital question for the Sattar League.